

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1074

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NU

SUBJECT: CONSERVATIVE PARTY POLITICS

REF: MANAGUA A-70

1. IT NOW APPEARS THE NEW CONSERVATIVE PARTY (PCN-P) PRESIDENT WILL BE RENE SANDINO ARGUELLO. IN A PRIVATE MEETING CALLED BY CURRENT PARTY PRESIDENT PAGUAGA ON SEPTEMBER 2 WHICH INCLUDED ANNOUNCED CANDIDATE ALBERTO CHAMORRO AND SANDINO IT WAS AGREED THAT CHAMORRO WOULD WITHDRAW HIS CANDIDACY IN FAVOR OF SANDINO. THE NEXT DAY AT A MEETING OF PARTY LEADERS FROM THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, THE SELECTION OF SANDINO WAS ANNOUNCED.

2. ALTHOUGH THERE IS STLL MUCH TIME BEFORE THE YEAR-END PARTY CONGRESS WHICH WILL FORMALLY SELECT THE NEW PARTY PRESIDENCY, SANDINO'S SELECTION IS LIKELY TO STICK. PAGUAGA AND OTHER PARTY OFFICIALS WERE WORRIED BY DIVISIVE JOCKEYING FOR THE POSITION BY ALBERTO CHAMORRO, EDMUNDO CHAMORRO, ALVARO CHAMORRO AND OTHERS WHO WERE INTENT THAT NO ONE WITH THE CHAMORRO NAME BE SELECTED (REF). FEELINGS HAD BECOME SO INTENSE, A PLAN TO ESTABLISH A COLLEGIUM WITH A ROTATING PRESIDENCY HAD GAINED CURRENCY. SANDINO HAS BEEN CONSIDERED A POSSIBLE PARTY LEADER FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE SELECTION PROCESS AND, IMPORTANTLY, OFFENDS NO ONE. SANDINO'S ADVANTAGE IS HE IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE AMBITIOUS TO BE NATIONAL PRESIDENT, THEREBY LEAVING OTHERS ROOM TO MANEUVER FOR TNFS DISTINCTION.

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3. SANDINO IS 46 YEAR OLD FRENCH-EDUCATED SURGEON, PEDIATRICIAN, AND CANCER SPECIALIST WHO HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY SINCE 1960; HOLDING PARTY SECRETARY POSITIONS BETWEEN 1964-66 AND AS DEPUTY SINCE 1967. HE IS QUIET, SINCERE AND FRIENDLY AS WELL AS INTELLIGENT AND A PERCEPTIVE POLITICIAN. HE HAS LONG HAD CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE EMBASSY.

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